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C7Ag

Agricultural Situation

Statistical
Reporting
Service

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1969
Census:
Yardstick
For Agriculture

A year from now, the new Census of Agriculture will be sent to farmers all over the United States and its possessions. It's the latest in a long line of agricultural measurements, first conducted in 1840.

The Census of Agriculture has evolved continually over the years, keeping up with changes in farming. But the purpose has never changed: to gather the most important facts about all American farms.

Here are the answers to some frequently asked questions about the nature of a census and about the 1969 Census in particular:

How will the Census be conducted?

This will be the first Census of Agriculture conducted by mail.

The availability of new computers makes it economical to compile one list of all farm operators from a number of sources. So enumerators won't be knocking on the farmer's door as in past censuses. Instead, farmers will receive a questionnaire in the mail. When it is completed it should be returned by mail in the envelope provided.

The mailing method has already proven out in tests and in other surveys.

In trial mailings, questionnaires were returned by 85-95 percent of the respondents. Follow-up procedures will be used to obtain the few reports not returned.

When will the Census be?

Questionnaires will be mailed to farm operators next year—in January 1970. Questions will generally refer to farming activities during the calendar year 1969.

Do I have to return the questionnaire?

Yes. Just as the law requires that Census be taken, it also requires you to respond. It is a violation of Federal law not to do so. So, even if only a few of the questions apply to you, fill out the questionnaire, sign it, and return it.

Who will be included in the Census?

The mailing list of farm operators is being compiled largely from administrative records of Federal agencies. The list will include nearly all places and

farm operators having some agricultural operations.

Who will see my answers?

By Federal law, the answers farmers give must be kept absolutely confidential. Only employees of the Census Bureau have access to individual reports. They can use the reports only for statistical purposes. Summaries are prepared for counties, States, and the United States.

Individual answers cannot be made public or revealed to other Government agencies.

ANSWERS QUESTIONS THE CENSUS OF

What will the questionnaire be like?

To avoid asking unnecessary questions to small farmers and reduce the cost of processing the data, a "short" version of the Census questionnaire has been developed. If you sell less than \$2,500 worth of farm products a year, you can expect to get a shorter version of the basic questionnaire. A second version, designed for farms with larger sales, asks the same questions but in somewhat greater detail.

Both questionnaires can be filled out rapidly. The questions are largely self-explanatory, and there is an accompanying leaflet for the regular questionnaire which explains extra details where needed.

The questionnaire asks farmers to skip any sections which don't apply to them.

What will be covered in the Census?

You will be asked to report how much farmland you own, rent, or lease, the amount of irrigated land and the amount in drainage.

You will also be asked questions about crops and livestock produced, contract production, farm machinery and equip-

ment, chemicals you use, operating expenses, and type of farm organization.

How will the questionnaire differ from the one used in 1964?

Some of the questions asked in 1964 were pruned from the new Census. Questions about the farm operator and his family were eliminated as they will be obtained in the Census of Population. Questions on the 1964 Census for which need is limited have also been pruned.

Some questions which might have been included in the general question-

TO YOUR ABOUT 1969 AGRICULTURE

naire will be asked in later surveys sent only to the type of farms to which they apply.

Several new questions have been added since the last Census. These include questions concerning type of organization, farm-related income, estimated total value of farm machinery and equipment, and total operating expenses.

Won't the Census repeat questions asked in other Government surveys?

The Census will cover basic items for each farm similar to those asked on other surveys. However, the exact questions asked about these items may differ from survey to survey.

By asking basic questions about farming, the Census becomes a unique source of uniform data for the entire country. The Census is also the only source of this data published separately for a number of farm types and economic classes.

There is another reason why the Census asks about items farmers may already have reported on. Most Government surveys, such as those made

by SRS, are based on samples of farms, from which estimates for all farms are made. When the Census data become available, they are used by SRS and other agencies as benchmarks for revising these estimates.

SRS also relies heavily on Census data in preparing annual county estimates for a number of crops, for use in USDA programs.

Will farm operators also have to report in the 1970 Census of Population?

Yes. Like the Census of Agriculture, the Census of Population and Housing by law must be answered. The Population and Housing questionnaire will be mailed in late March 1970.

There is virtually no duplication of questions asked between the two censuses. The Population Census will provide information on people, occupations, and housing in rural America to complement the picture of farming obtained from the Census of Agriculture.

Will there be any special Census surveys?

Yes. And some farmers may be included in one or two of them when they're conducted in 1971. A survey concerning farm mortgages, debt, and credit practices will be sent to a sample of farm operators. In addition, there will be surveys of specialized types of farms (cash grain, cotton, or livestock, for example) sent to some operators.

To cover additional aspects of agriculture, there will be a census of agricultural services and of irrigation organizations.

How will the Census benefit farmers?

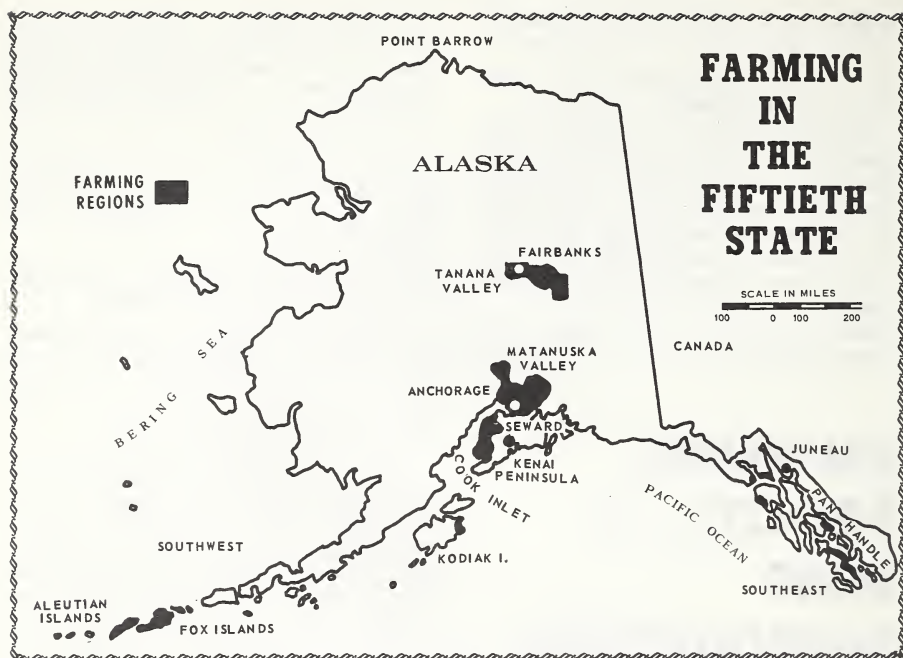
Statistics gathered in the Census are basic to many USDA farm programs: acreage allotments, extension work, and conservation, for example.

The Census is also vital in maintaining the accuracy of crop and livestock reports.

Census data will help you in other ways. Detailed county and State statistics are needed by your farm organizations and local and State governments.

The Census of Agriculture is also the basis of much important research done by USDA, State universities, and private companies and foundations.

Statistical Reporting Service



Agriculture in Alaska is a job for pioneers who are willing to adapt Mainland methods to cope with new conditions.

Some of these conditions and the way they're being met are described in the annual crop summary of Alaska's Crop and Livestock Reporting Service.

The most impressive fact about Alaska is the land itself. There are 375 million acres in the State, enough to swallow up Texas, California and Montana.

The north-south extent of Alaska is 1100 miles. It embraces a lot of weather. The State's southern tip is farther north than any point on the Mainland United States. The northernmost point, Point Barrow, is 340 miles north of the Arctic Circle. Alaska is parallel on the globe to Norway and Sweden.

The weather gets colder as you travel north and inland, away from the moderating ocean currents. It also gets dryer. Precipitation varies from 220 inches a year on the southern coast to less than 4 inches in the far north.

Alaskan farms are located in the southern half of the State. The average April temperature is about 35° above zero.

Freezes end in mid-May and resume

by mid-December, allowing a short growing season.

During the season, the scattered coastal farms receive more rain, less sunlight, and cooler temperatures than farms further inland.

Average precipitation drops from 200 inches a year on the Southwestern, Southeastern, and Kenai Peninsula coastal farms to 60 inches in the Matanuska Valley near Anchorage, at the head of the Cook Inlet.

Further north at the Tanana Valley farms near Fairbanks, moisture drops to 12 inches per year.

With the summer comes the mid-night sun, speeding up crop growth and nearly banishing the night. The Tanana Valley receives up to 21 hours of summer daylight. Further south, the Matanuska Valley and Coastal regions receive a maximum of 17 hours of daylight in the summer.

Most Alaskan agriculture is concentrated in the Matanuska Valley. Most of the State's grains, vegetables, dairy cattle, hogs, and chickens are produced in the area.

Next in importance is the Tanana Valley near Fairbanks. Tanana farms produce 18 percent of the total value of crops grown, including mainly potatoes, oats, barley, mixed grains, and

grasses. The valley is also second in importance for chickens raised.

Farms on the Kenai Peninsula rank second in the output of all hay. Some oats, barley, mixed grains, potatoes, beef cattle, and sheep are also produced.

Agriculture in the Panhandle farms of the Southeast is limited to beef cattle and grassland.

Southwestern farms are located on Kodiak Island on the Fox Islands, at the tip of the Alaskan Peninsula. On lush grasslands, they produce the bulk of Alaska's sheep, and are second to the Matanuska Valley in the value of beef cattle raised.

*Alaska Crop and Livestock
Reporting Service*

Agriculture With a Big Difference

In many respects, farming in Alaska is like farming in other States. But there are plenty of differences, too. Here are some of the similarities and the most notable differences:

- As on the Mainland, there are relatively few farms compared with past years. There are 310 farms in Alaska, less than in 1967 and less than half as many as in 1939, the peak year.

- Alaska, like other western States, has more grazing land than cropland. Most of the 2 million acres in farming are grazing lands leased from the Federal Government.

- There are fewer farm workers than formerly, following the prevalent trend. In 1967, the average hourly rate for hired hands without room and board was \$2.20, about \$1 more than the U.S. average.

- The population served by Alaskan farms, like the total U.S. population, has grown fairly quickly. Compared with 226,000 people in 1960, the State had 277,000 people in 1968.

- Crops are like those in other northern States: Potatoes, cabbage, lettuce, celery; oats, barley, grain mixtures, and seeded and native grassland.

However, much production is consumed for feed or on farms. Of the 1967 total crop value, \$2.16 million dollars, only \$0.87 million had sales value. The largest crops sales were for potatoes, hay, and lettuce.

- The value of livestock raised was

greater than the value of crops produced, a situation typical of farming in many other States. Total livestock sales amounted to \$3.15 million in 1967.

- As elsewhere, beef cattle numbers are increasing, and account for two thirds of the State's 8,500 cattle. Dairy cattle numbers have been declining.

- Despite these similarities, meat production in Alaska is highly unusual in many ways.

Because of the abundance of grazing land, most beef is grass-fed. Most is slaughtered during the fall months. Meat is sold directly to retailer or consumer, since there are no public auctions. Thus, much beef is spoken for before slaughter.

Raising beef and other livestock is only one-half of a farmer's task. The other half is getting it to market. Most beef stock are raised on the Kodiak and Aleutian Islands or the Kenai Peninsula on the southern Coast. Island-raised beef must be transported to the mainland by plane or boat; then shipped north to the populated area which runs from Seward to Fairbanks.

Hogs, raised mostly in the Matanuska and Tanana Valleys, are raised on local grains and garbage collected from nearby towns. Only 1,200 hogs were raised during 1967, and pork demand exceeds the supply. As with beef, producers market their own animals.

- Contrasting with the general downturn in sheep numbers, the Alaskan flock expanded 12 percent in 1967. Most of the 27,000 sheep are raised on the Aleutian Islands, about 750 miles from Anchorage. Heavy rainfall provides abundant forage and helps keep fleece clean. Fleece weight averaged 11.7 pounds in 1967, 3 pounds heavier than the U.S. average.

- Chickens are raised in all farming regions. Poultry farmers receive large air shipments of 5-month old pullets, use them as layers for up to 7 months, then cull them for meat at about 1 year. There are no commercial broilers.

- Alaska features two unusual forms of livestock. Saddle and pack horses are numerous throughout the State. And the Eskimos raise reindeer in the Southwestern region. Reindeer meat production totaled over 600,000 pounds in 1967, mostly for commercial sale.

*Alaska Crop and Livestock
Reporting Service*

Land Office Business

In recent years, farm real estate markets have done business at a "land office" pace.

The heavy demand for farmland has kept prices moving up at the rate of 5.5 percent a year during the past decade.

Last year was no exception: Farm-land values were 6 percent higher than a year earlier on March 1 and again on November 1, 1968. (Alaska and Hawaii are not included.)

The most active land markets in 1968 were in the South where farm technology continued to change rap-

idly. Between November 1967 and November 1968, the average value of farmland and buildings on the market in the Delta and Southeastern regions rose 10 percent.

Spurred on by rising milk prices in the second half of 1968, land markets in parts of the Lake States and Northeast were also unusually active.

There was a leveling off of farmland values in the Corn Belt, partly because of low corn prices during the early fall. Relatively stable prices were also reported in most Western States.

The index of value per acre compared with 1957-59 for each of the 48 States is shown below.

State and region	1967	1968	1968
	Nov. 1	Mar. 1	Nov. 1
	1957-59=100		
Maine.....	150	154	164
New Hampshire...	176	179	191
Vermont.....	185	190	204
Massachusetts....	168	170	178
Rhode Island.....	182	186	195
Connecticut.....	168	170	176
New York.....	149	155	165
New Jersey.....	164	169	181
Pennsylvania.....	169	171	180
Delaware.....	189	192	196
Maryland.....	194	201	214
Northeast.....	167	170	181
Michigan.....	155	157	166
Wisconsin.....	143	146	156
Minnesota.....	145	147	156
Lake States.....	147	149	159
Ohio.....	152	153	158
Indiana.....	159	165	165
Illinois.....	152	156	158
Iowa.....	151	155	159
Missouri.....	178	186	192
Corn Belt.....	156	160	163
North Dakota.....	165	169	178
South Dakota.....	160	166	169
Nebraska.....	162	169	174
Kansas.....	155	162	168
Northern Plains.	160	166	171
Oklahoma.....	192	199	205
Texas.....	180	184	192
Southern Plains.	183	188	195
State and region	1967	1968	1968
	Nov. 1	Mar. 1	Nov. 1
	1957-59=100		
South Carolina..	173	181	194
Georgia.....	209	225	239
Florida.....	161	168	171
Alabama.....	194	201	213
Southeast.....	183	192	201
Mississippi.....	197	202	212
Arkansas.....	220	232	247
Louisiana.....	199	208	214
Delta States...	205	214	225
Virginia.....	162	167	172
West Virginia...	142	150	160
North Carolina...	163	169	173
Kentucky.....	166	175	178
Tennessee.....	174	185	195
Appalachian...	165	173	178
Montana.....	168	171	175
Idaho.....	147	148	150
Wyoming.....	163	164	169
Colorado.....	156	158	161
New Mexico.....	171	169	171
Arizona.....	141	141	142
Utah.....	140	142	143
Nevada.....	148	149	150
Mountain.....	155	156	159
Washington.....	146	150	158
Oregon.....	148	150	159
California.....	181	180	183
Pacific.....	172	172	176
48 States...	166	170	176



Based on Information Available January 1, 1969

COOLER LAND MARKET

U.S. farmland values are expected to continue advancing in 1969, but at a somewhat slower rate than in recent years. According to real estate reporters in an October 1968 survey, the number of farm sales, the number of farms on the market, and the number of people looking for farmland were down slightly from a year earlier. Reduced market activity will likely continue into the coming months.

FOOD PRICES SLOW DOWN . . .

Little change in food prices is expected during the first half of the year. Last year, retail store prices rose 3 percent. But the growth in consumer demand is slowing and supplies of farm products are large. Compared with the first half of 1968, fruit, vegetable and pork prices will be lower; potato, lamb, dairy and poultry product prices, higher.

. . . AND FARM-RETAIL SPREAD WIDENS

The farmer's share of the retail food dollar is likely to decline during the first half of the year. After averaging 39 cents last year, the farmer's share will dip to 38 cents—the same level as in 1967. The remaining share of the food dollar, the farm-retail spread, is widening because of increased wage rates and other food-marketing costs.

TOBACCO PRICES UP

Tobacco prices at auctions have been above last season's high levels. High prices should hold up throughout the rest of the current marketing season.

The higher prices are due to the 5 percent smaller total tobacco supplies this season and generally better quality. Although supplies are smaller, they are ample enough to meet domestic and export needs.

HIGH

FLYING

SRS SURVEY

IN ARIZONA

Remote sensing means using a mechanical device to "see" a subject without having to inspect it in person.

In Statistical Reporting Service surveys which use this technique, the device is a camera. The subject is crops or livestock.

But, how remote is "remote?" When SRS makes a remote-sensing survey, the distance between camera and subject can be as little as 15 feet, or as much as 15 miles.

At the short end of the sensing range are experimental photographs in Texas citrus groves, taken at a distance of 15 feet to make fruit counts (see the December Agricultural Situation).

At the far end are 15-mile-high reconnaissance photos, made by an Air Force U-2 plane. The high altitude photos, taken last spring, are the basis for a recent citrus tree survey by the Arizona Crop Reporting Service.

Survey results, to be published in the near future, will tell growers just how many citrus trees of each kind and variety are in production in Arizona. Pertinent facts will include the acreage, number and ages of trees, and tree

spacing.

The photos did not provide all of this detail. Information such as the age, variety, and kind of citrus tree, and row spacings, cannot be obtained from an aerial photograph.

But two vital types of information can be determined from studying the pictures: How much land is in citrus groves, and where the groves are located.

The acreage was obtained simply by outlining and measuring the area identified as groves, and converting this area to acres. Some ground reconnaissance was also used, however, to pinpoint the location of very young citrus trees. These may not be distinguishable in the U-2 photos.

In addition to supplying the acreage, the photos told the statisticians just where to find citrus trees for the survey.

Each area identified as a grove on the photo was subdivided into 40-acre blocks. There were 1,336 such blocks throughout the State. Blocks to be surveyed were then mapped out on county highway maps.



Air Force U-2 plane similar to the one used to survey Arizona citrus groves.

In November, 5 enumerators from the Arizona Crop and Livestock Reporting Service visited 200 randomly-selected blocks, making a census of every tree in the groves.

During the next several years, the remaining blocks will be visited, to obtain a complete State citrus tree census.

As in other fruit tree surveys conducted by State offices of the Statistical Reporting Service, success was aided by the cooperation of growers who allowed the enumerators to survey their groves.

Even with the growers' okay, enumerators always alerted the local Sheriff to their presence ahead of time. There is a stiff fine for any would-be citrus rustlers found in the groves.

The high-altitude photos represent a tremendous savings in time and money. Ordinarily, it would be necessary to hire a light plane or helicopter to make desired photographs of citrus country. And the resulting photos could not completely cover the large area which the U-2's high altitude commanded.

Cost of the U-2 photos to the Arizona Crop Reporting Service was minimal. The only cost to the Crop Reporting Service was for developing positive prints. The pictures were the by-product of regular Air Force training flights. So picture-taking exercises by the U-2 pilots turned into a valuable survey for the State's citrus industry.

Arizona's irrigated citrus groves produce a wealth of Valencia, navel, and sweet oranges, grapefruit, lemons, and tangerines.

Lemons, grapefruit, and Valencia oranges account for most of the citrus crop. About two-thirds of the citrus grown in Arizona is sold for fresh markets.

Sales value of the 1967-68 crop was estimated at \$33.0 million by the Statistical Reporting Service.

The December Crop Report forecast the 1968-69 Arizona citrus crop at 401,500 tons, which would be 35,000 tons more than in 1967-68. Except for grapefruit, all crops are forecast larger than last season.

*Arizona Crop and Livestock
Reporting Service*

TO HATCH OR NOT TO HATCH?

Unspeckled turkey eggs belong in the waste can. The few that hatch bring forth diseased poults, few of which survive.

A close study of chalk-white eggs revealed they were slightly thinner (by 0.04 millimeters) than normal, and that they had larger pores than usual, possibly caused by a low phosphorus content. Whatever the defect, it resulted in unusually high bacteria penetration into eggs during incubation.

Shell areas were exposed to poultry droppings seeded with *Salmonella* bacteria, and then were checked for bacterial penetration. In a typical test, speckled eggs were completely free from *Salmonella* after 48 hours of incubation. But 12 percent of the white-shelled eggs had been completely penetrated. Another 12 percent of the unspeckled eggs were penetrated to levels within the shell or the membranes underneath it.

Agricultural Research Service



OUT WEST, WATER SEEPS IN TOO SLOWLY

Two experimental methods promise to increase the efficiency of furrow irrigation in certain problem soils of the western States. The absorption rate of only about .05 inch of water per hour makes these soils inadequate for efficient crop production without more irrigation than is practical.

The first method increases moisture infiltration by incorporating straw in the surface 6 inches of soil at the rate of 6 tons per acre.

The second involves cultivating the furrow bottom to a depth of about 1 inch.

Both experiments increased the water intake in irrigation furrows from 50 to 100 percent. Cultivation was less effective than straw treatment in the first and second irrigations, but more efficient during the third and fourth.

SNOWMELT RUNS OFF TOO QUICKLY ON NORTHERN PLAINS

Farmers in the semiarid Northern Great Plains can hold more water from snowmelt on their land by using stubble-mulched strips.

Standing stubble, up to 20 inches,

makes a snowpack melt faster than snow on bare ground, because stubble traps heat from the sun. The faster the snow melts, the more water is lost in runoff.

One method to retain more water is to plough strips on the contour in standing stubble. The standing stubble traps more snow, which melts faster than the snow in the strips. The unmelted snow on the strips should deter the surface runoff of the snowmelt.

PIEDMONT GRASS AND GRAIN GROW TOGETHER

Southern Piedmont farmers may get good yields of both wheat and Coastal Bermudagrass from the same field in a crop year. Wheat, planted in dormant Coastal sod, yielded as high as 36 bushels per acre.

First-harvest yields of Coastal following the wheat were lower than yields of Coastal growing alone. However, by the end of the season, the total yield of Coastal differed little from that of Coastal growing alone.

When the wheat and Coastal were cut for hay, dry weight per acre was nearly 3 tons when 160 pounds of nitrogen was applied to the wheat.

Not only does the farmer get grass and wheat from the same field, but it's easier to seed wheat in sod than to prepare a seedbed.



not-so-retired crop reporter speaks his mind

Each one of the more than 650,000 volunteer crop reporters—farmers, ranchers, and agribusinessmen—performs a highly essential task. Most, like Martin Rockman, of Barron, Wisconsin, realize how important the chore of reporting is to the progress of U.S. agriculture.

Two years ago, on the 100th birthday of the continuous U.S. crop and livestock reporting, the Secretary of Agriculture announced: "... these cooperating farmers and businessmen form the backbone of the (crop) reporting system. Their voluntary reporting . . . helps hold down the cost of collecting statistics . . . their expert judgments . . . enhance the accuracy of reports."

Seldom has the flavor of this job been captured as well as by Mr. Rockman. He was prompted to write to H. M. Walters, Wisconsin State Statistician, after reading a list of reporters who sent in their data for at least 11 months in 1967. Here are Mr. Rockman's words:

"DEAR MR. WALTERS:

"It was a real pleasure for me to read over the names of the faithful reporters. I began to send in the reports as regular as possible more than 40 years ago and many times I walked to town to get the report in the mail as near as possible to the due date. Not much fun to wade the knee deep snow and face a stiff wind at 15 to 30 below, but I felt it was a duty and had to be done. In later years I will admit I missed, but not often.

"Last fall I sold the cows and farm and moved to town. I was only 81 years old and all my relatives made me quit—arthritis was getting me down. Did I like it? *Heck, No!* I would rather be on the farm with my Guernseys, than live like I now do, and have nothing to do.

"Retirement, I am telling you, is just no good. All you get out of it is arthritis, fat, lazy and ornry. Now soon I will be 83. I feel good and that is all I am thankful for (and that is a lot) and my wife and family.

"So it's the best of luck to you, your staff and all the reporters. I enjoyed it.

"Yours truly,

"Martin Rockman

"Barron, Wisconsin.

"P.S. Please send me a copy of the reporter's opinions, once in awhile."

LAND DOWN UNDER RISING FAST AS U.S. TRADE CHALLENGE

"Wheat and meat, feed grains and dairy products, rice, cotton, tobacco, and dried fruit," begins to sound like a list of U.S. farm exports, but it isn't. It's a list of some Australian exports coming on strong—and projected to become even stronger in the decade ahead. Sizeable competition for U.S. agriculture in the 1970's? Perhaps. In the 1980's? You bet.

These Aussie farm exports are projected to outstrip their present totals, improve most yields and expand acreage, just about yearly through 1980. Australia expects to increase her exports to some of the most lucrative and stable markets in the world—Japan, and the U.S.

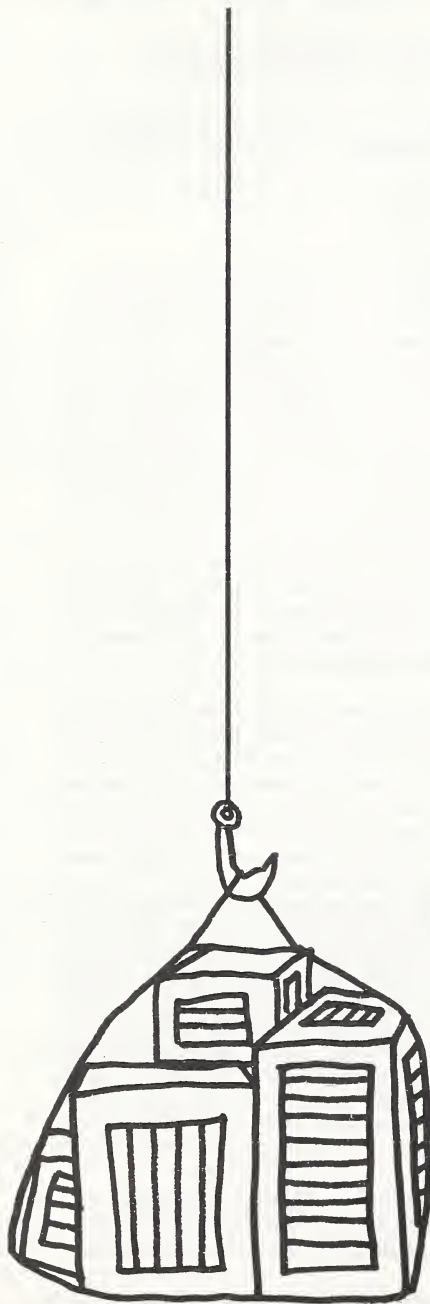
One of the most tantalizing statistics Australia's been putting forth has been on wheat, which hit an all-time record high in 1966-67 at 12.7 million long tons. Due to the great drought the following year wheat output dropped to a precarious 7.5 million tons. But, now, forecasts are optimistic that 1968-69 output will hit a new record, rising to some 14 million long tons—nearly double last year's output.

Another accomplishment was the remarkable jump in shipments to the United States of fresh and preserved beef and veal: From a mere 2,000-ton average in 1955-56 through 1957-58, such shipments bounded to more than 45 times as much in 1958-59 through 1961-62—a matter of 3 years. Dramatically, shipments doubled again the next year. Bumping along since then, shipments have never averaged less than 144,000 long tons in a year.

A further sign of the times is seen in the just-born contract with Japanese businessmen for feedgrains. This experiment, begun in the past few months, may very well boost Australia as an important feedgrain supplier to Japan, whose leaping demand for beef and shortage of acreage for feedgrains is well known. New Australian acreage for these grains, mostly corn and sorghum grain, have been in previously little-used northern areas of the Island Continent.

Up to now, Australia has depended on wheat, mainly, and barely and oats to feed its beef, sheep and other livestock.

Although Australia has been noted for its sheep raising, more of these have been raised for wool than for meat.



About three-fifths of world trade in sheep meats has been between chief supplier, New Zealand and major consumer the United Kingdom.

Australian mutton and lamb wag different tales. Lamb sales have slumped in recent years, as the country has shipped less lamb, more mutton. But world lamb exports also total less than shipments of mutton—a much cheaper meat.

Thus Australian mutton exports, formerly far behind lamb exports, were nearly triple the shipments of lamb between 1960 and 1964-65.

But the major cash meat crop is beef and Australia's chief customer, the United States, took some 35 percent of Australian output of fresh and preserved beef and veal in 1964-65—some 158,000 long tons. The steady upward trend began in the 1950's and is projected to continue in the next decade. The United Kingdom also takes a generous helping of Australian meats.

Australia now accounts for some one-fifth of the world's beef-veal trade.

Part of this success, at least in the early years of the big beef push, came from a temporary but deliberate switch in diets. Traditionally among the world's big beef eaters, Australians deferred their taste for beef to foreign trade, and ate more lamb and mutton.

By 1960-61 Australian beef consumption recovered, while levels for lamb held steady, and for mutton, declined. Beef-veal output rose to meet both domestic and foreign demand. By 1980, Australian beef-veal supplies are projected to reach a possible high of 1.2 million long tons (carcass weight).

Lassoed to growing U.S. imports, much of the Australian beef-veal trade could have been stunted were it not for U.S. restrictions against buying meat from suppliers where there is danger of hoof and mouth disease.

Australian projections to 1980 for some dairy products also are good. However, other animal products may not do as well. Tallow output, for example, although expected to rise through 1975, is expected to level off by 1980. And hide and skin production is not expected to keep its present pace—possibly because of the need for breeding cattle to beef up herds that suffered heavy losses in recent drought years.

But dairy production of such items as processed milk and casein are ex-

pected to rise and compete with similar U.S. products, especially nonfat dry milk. These Australian exports are projected to increase from 23,000 long tons (1965) to some 28,000 in 1980.

Hand in hand with rising levels of beef-veal output have come advances in Australian feedgrain output—mostly wheat, barley, and oats. Now also, there is emphasis on corn and sorghum grain for export to Japan.

Hopes for major feedgrain development are high among both Australian farmers and Japanese businessmen. Australia will progressively increase its proportion of Japan's feedgrain market so that by 1980 Australia should become one of Japan's most important sources.

Another promising Australian export is fruit. Australia now is the world's third largest producer of dried fruit. Besides, production of canned deciduous fruits—mainly pears, peaches and pineapples—more than doubled in five years ended 1964-65. The proportions of pears and pineapples has risen substantially for the period. However apricots have shown a long-term downturn. Generally, yields have been up for Australian fruit crops, although output depends a lot on weather conditions. Minimum pricing laid down by the Government has favored bigger crops.

Other Australian farm commodities trending upward and projected to continue include cotton—advancing output some 8-fold while decreasing acreage about one-sixth between 1938-39 and 1965-66—rice output—tripling to 63.5 thousand tons since 1945-46—and tobacco, which had increased from a mere half-million pounds used for cigarettes in 1950-51 to more than 16 million pounds in 1963-64.

Rounding out promise of future trade for the country are projections for population to advance 40 percent by 1980, while GNP should triple. But if GNP triples, personal consumption is expected only to double. Most logical places for the remaining surpluses to go are Australia's currently top markets—the United Kingdom, Japan, Western Europe and the United States. They'll mostly compete with U.S. targets for trade in much the same products.

*Mary Long
Economic Research Service*

LARGER SUPPLIES THIS SEASON FOR: OATS

Farmers sowed more oats this season and got more yield per acre. This combination resulted in the most notable year-to-year gain for the crop in more than a decade.

Estimate for the oat crop on November 1, 1968 was 934 million bushels, highest since 1963. And such high output (some 19 percent above a year earlier) added to the carryover of 270 million bushels (July 1, 1968) would bring supplies to 1.2 billion bushels. This increase followed a 10-year downtrend, bringing the total supply back to about the 1962-66 average.

The big crop and lower prices likely will lead to heavier feeding—considering the high livestock count and heavy demand for meat.

Despite this higher pace of expected domestic use, carryover next July 1 probably will be the largest since the earlier 1960's—some 325 million bushels, compared with 270 million in the two previous July's, for example. All of this has a bearing on prices.

Prices hit a seasonal but unusually low farm price of 53 cents a bushel in August 1968. Then by mid-November prices had advanced to 60 cents. At least through spring, prices per bushel are expected to show further strength.

Nevertheless, prices are expected to stay below 1967-68 levels, when they ranged from 65 through 69 cents a bushel, between November and June.

BARLEY

A larger barley acreage this year with near record yield resulted in the biggest production since 1962. The larger crop, plus outlook for heavier use, make this an unusual year for this major feed grain.

Total supply, for example, was 570 million bushels, 14 percent more than a year earlier. With production highest in 6 years, at 425 million bushels, there will be more for both malting and feeding.

The big crop brought prices down 10 to 15 cents per bushel below a year earlier, in the summer and fall. But the lower prices, combined with more live-

stock and with higher demand for meats, are expected to boost feeding more than in any recent season. And about two-thirds of domestic use is usually for feeding.

Lion's share of the rest of consumption—about a fourth of the total—generally goes into making alcoholic beverages. The slim remainder is for human food and for seed.

Although feeding declined last season to about 62 percent of domestic consumption of the crop, beverage use has trended upward to nearly a third of the total.

GRAIN SORGHUM

Grain sorghum has been setting records in production and use in recent years—yet the carryover has declined. Through higher yields grain sorghum production has been large even though 4 to 7 million sorghum acres have been diverted annually under the Feed Grain Program. But greater demand for cattle feed and heavy export movement has reduced carryover more than 50 percent in 7 years, mostly since 1964.

This season promises a crop second in size only to last season's record. The sorghum grain crop estimated as of November 1, 1968, at 755 million bushels, is 27 percent above the 1962-66 average and less than 2 percent below the all-time record high last year.

Supplies this season were up some 4 percent above 1967-68. This supply is expected to take care of domestic use and exports this year and leave about the same carryover as last season, about 300 million bushels.

Domestic demand is expected to continue strong in 1968-69. Further, beef cattle prices should continue favorable to feed costs.

So, domestic consumption in 1968-69 could be 5 to 10 percent above the 552 million bushels consumed last season—maybe equalling the record use in 1966-67.

Exports are another story. Smaller P. L. 480 shipments in prospect could more than offset possible pickup in dollar sales. That would reduce the total to a bit below what was shipped in 1967-68.



SAM STAT SAYS

"Check My Data"

A brief roundup

■ The average electric bill of farmers surveyed last July by SRS was \$17.59. About \$1 higher than in 1967, it represented more kilowatts used, but slightly lower rates. ■ Well-filled Cows: Dairy cows ate a 5-percent heftier portion of grains and concentrates on December 1, 1968 than the year before. The milk-feed price ratio was up 7 percent in comparison with December 1967. ■ The final cotton estimate for the 1968 crop put production at 10.8 million bales, versus 7.5 million bales produced in 1967. The average yield worked out to 511 pounds per acre harvested. ■ Potatoes: Total fall output dropped 5 percent this year, to 220 million hundredweight. ■ Tomatoes: Fresh tomato production was down slightly in 1968; but prices rose sharply. Processing tomato production was up by over one-third, but prices dropped only slightly. Total value of both crops was \$512 million, up \$94 million from 1967.

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RURAL HOUSING NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

A waterpipe makes much of the difference in quality between U.S. rural and urban housing. About 20 percent in rural areas did not have inside plumbing, but less than 1 percent of the housing in urban places lacked it in 1966.

Rural nonfarm families have a larger share of newer (thus more adequate) housing than either urban or farm families.

But, more than half of

the occupied substandard housing units in the United States were in rural areas, though under a third of total U.S. housing was located there, in 1960. Most substandard units were lived in by families having incomes less than \$6,000 per year.

Although low-income families don't necessarily occupy substandard housing—55 percent of such families—with incomes below \$3,000—did live in substandard units in 1960.

Nonetheless, substandard housing problems were serious: About a third lacked plumbing; two-fifths, inside plumbing;

and about a fourth was dilapidated.

Rural housing improved a lot in the 1960's, but mostly for families having incomes over \$6,000 a year.

About 3.7 million new homes were built, another 15.6 million received minor repairs between 1960-66. And only 5 percent of all those units were for families with incomes under \$6,000.

Only 10 percent of new homes in rural areas had aid in financing from Government Agencies, despite many programs aimed to help finance housing for low- or middle-income families.

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